

# International Day to End Obstetric Fistula Advocacy and Media Messages

## Messaging for advocacy asks

Obstetric fistula is a neglected public health and human rights issue, and life shattering for two million women in some of the world's most disadvantaged communities. To achieve SDG3, functioning maternal health services - including emergency obstetric care - must be in place.

Ask your leaders to invest in training more fistula surgeons in low-resource settings. It is time to end obstetric fistula and ensure that no woman is left behind.

## Messaging for media statements

Obstetric fistula is a neglected public health and human rights issue. It is a childbirth injury caused by unrelieved obstructed labour, resulting in an abnormal opening between the vagina and the bladder and/or rectum, which leads to uncontrollable leaking of urine and/or stool from the vagina.

Obstetric fistula is a life shattering condition affecting two million women in 59 low resource countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and certain parts of Asia, with up to 100,000 additional women tragically developing a fistula every year in some of the world's poorest and most disadvantaged communities.

Obstetric fistula is entirely preventable when women and girls have access to comprehensive maternal health services, including skilled birth attendants and emergency obstetric care.

For every woman who receives treatment for her fistula, at least 49 more go without, because of the global shortage of trained, skilled fistula surgeons, and a huge unmet need to treat and repair the backlog of women suffering from this condition.

Ending obstetric fistula within a generation is a goal not only worthy of, but mandatory to achieving the SDGs.

It is time that obstetric fistula is put front and centre of global conversations to ensure that no woman is left behind.

Join us and help more women suffering with obstetric fistula to recover and re-build their lives.